

DATeline NO. 79 NEW YORK
DAVID MCALARY

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THE TREASURES OF NEW YORK HARBOR

ANNCR: AID NOW, THE VOICE OF AMERICA PRESENTS . . . DATeline. . .
ANOTHER IN THE SERIES OF PROGRAMS PEOPLE, PLACES AND
EVENTS IN THE UNITED STATES. TODAY, DAVID MCALARY'S
REPORT FROM NEW YORK ON . . . A HISTORICAL GOLDMINE OF SHIPS
FROM THE PAST.

VOICE: THE DAYS OF THE GREAT WIND-DRIVEN SAILING SHIPS ARE OVER --
THE DAYS OF SQUARE-RIGGERS AND SCHOONERS, BRIGANTINES AND
JUNKS. SO ARE THE LATER DAYS OF STEAMERS AND PADDLEWHEELERS.
FOR MOST OF US, THESE SEAGOING VESSELS BELONG TO CENTURIES
PAST. BUT THERE'S ONE NEW YORK-BASED GROUP FOR WHICH SUCH
SHIPS ARE A THING OF TODAY.

FOR TWELVE YEARS, THE NATIONAL MARITIME HISTORICAL SOCIETY
HAS BEEN RECOVERING OLD, SUNKEN SHIPS FROM ALL OVER THE
WORLD. THE SOCIETY HAS MADE EXPEDITIONS TO INDONESIA,
AUSTRALIA, SOUTH AFRICA, AND TO MANY WIDELY SCATTERED ISLANDS
AROUND THE GLOBE TO RESCUE VESSELS THAT ONCE SAILED PROUDLY
UNDER THE FLAGS OF SOME OF THE WORLD'S GREAT CIVILIZATIONS.
BUT NOW THE SOCIETY IS FINALLY LOOKING INTO IT'S OWN BACK-
YARD -- NEW YORK HARBOR. PETER STANFORD, SOCIETY PRESIDENT,
CALLS THAT GREAT HARBOR A RICH MINE OF WRECKED SHIPS:

TAPE: CUT ONE -- PETER STANFORD

"THE U-S ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS IS ADDRESSING THE PROBLEM
NOWADAYS OF CLEANING UP THE MESS IN NEW YORK HARBOR -- IT
IS QUITE A MESS -- OVER TWO-THOUSAND HULKS THAT HAVE BEEN
DRIVEN ASHORE, WRECKED, ABANDONED, WHATNOT. AND THEY --
VERY INTELLIGENTLY, WE THINK -- HAVE ASKED THE NATIONAL

TAPE: MARITIME HISTORICAL SOCIETY, IN COOPERATION WITH A LOCAL
(CONT) MUSEUM HERE, THE SOUTH STREET SEAPORT MUSEUM, TO LOOK INTO
JUST WHAT THESE WRECKS ARE. NOW, THAT TAKES A LITTLE DOING.
YOU DON'T JUST GO OUT AND TAKE A SNAPSHOT AND COME HOME AGAIN.
SOMETIMES THEY'RE PILED ONE ON TOP OF THE OTHER. I THINK
IT WOULD BE FIVE YEARS BEFORE WE EVEN GOT A COMPLETE
PICTURE."

VOICE: THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY ALREADY KNOWS THAT PART OF THAT
PICTURE INVOLVES SOME VERY IMPORTANT BOATS. PETER STANFORD
SAYS THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY IS ALSO CERTAIN THAT MANY OF
THOSE SHIPS AT THE BOTTOM OF THE HARBOR DATE BACK TO THE
AMERICAN REVOLUTION:

TAPE: CUT TWO -- STANFORD

"ONE OF THEM THAT WE KNOW WE CANNOT RECOVER IS HIS MAJESTY'S
SHIP HUZZAR, WHICH WAS SUNK BY HITTING A ROCK. SHE WAS
CARRYING PAY TO SOME BRITISH TROOPS DURING THE BRITISH
OCCUPATION OF NEW YORK TWO-HUNDRED YEARS AGO, AND SHE WAS
ALSO CARRYING SOME AMERICAN PRISONERS OF WAR IN IRONS BELOW
DECK. AND THOSE PRISONERS OF WAR NEVER GOT AWAY. IF YOU
COULD FIND THAT SHIP, YOU WOULD FIND THEIR SKELETONS IN
THEIR CHAINS, DROWNED WHEN THAT SHIP WENT DOWN."

VOICE: UNFORTUNATELY, THAT PARTICULAR BOAT MAY NOT BE FOUND.

STANFORD THINKS THE HUZZAR WAS BURIED IN LANDFILL DURING
CONSTRUCTION NEAR THE HARBOR: ANOTHER VESSEL STANFORD SAYS
IS LYING AT THE HARBOR'S BOTTOM IS THE NEWTON, ONE OF THE
LAST WOODEN STEAMERS BUILT IN NEW YORK HARBOR. THEN, THERE
IS THE ENTIRE BOTTOM OF A NEW ENGLAND SQUARE-RIGGER.
STANFORD CALLS IT THE LAST EXAMPLE OF A VESSEL FROM THE END
OF THE ERA OF SAIL:

TAPE: CUT THREE -- STANFORD

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"NOW THAT'S A VERY DRAMATIC CASE. THE OTHER SHIPS WE'RE
GOING TO FIND, IN MY OPINION, ARE GOING TO BE ANONYMOUS
SHIPS. THEY'RE IMPORTANT BECAUSE THEY DID THE WORK OF THE
DAY. THE PARTICULARS ARE LESS IMPORTANT THAN THE STREAM OF
HISTORY TO GO DOWN HERE BECAUSE WE'RE GOING TO BE FINDING

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TAPE:
(CONT)

OUT FROM WHAT IS THERE WHAT WAS IMPORTANT."

VOICE: STANFORD AND HIS NATIONAL MARITIME HISTORICAL SOCIETY HAVE LEARNED FROM PAST EXPERIENCE NOT TO EXPECT THE SHIPS IN THE HARBOR TO BE WELL-PRESERVED. THEY ARE AT THE BOTTOM IN THE FIRST PLACE BECAUSE THEY WERE SMASHED UP IN SOME WAY ON THE SURFACE:

TAPE: CUT FOUR -- STANFORD

"IT ISN'T RIGHT TO SAY THEY'RE WELL-PRESERVED SO THAT PEOPLE WOULD EXPECT TO SEE A SHIP -- YOU KNOW, YOU COULD PRACTICALLY STEP ABOARD AND START GIVING ORDERS AND, YOU KNOW, RUN UP THE SAILS AND -- ONCE ABOARD THE LUGGER THE GIRL IS MINE! BUT THE PIECES OF THE SHIPS, THE ELEMENTS OF THE -- VERY IMPORTANT ELEMENTS -- ARE WELL-PRESERVED, AND THOSE ARE FASCINATING TO PEOPLE. ONE THING THAT HAS ALREADY BEEN LOCATED IS THE CABIN OF A LITTLE HARBOR WORK VESSEL. AND THERE'S ANOTHER VESSEL JUST LIKE HER ALONG SIDE, BUT SHE'S MORE DESTROYED. NOW, IN ALL THE KNOWLEDGE WE HAD ABOUT WORKING VESSELS IN NEW YORK HARBOR, WE HAD NEVER SEEN SHIPS LIKE THESE TWO. WE SEEM TO HAVE UNCOVERED A NEW SHIP TYPE. WE'RE NOT QUITE SURE. IT'S STAGGERING TO THINK OF!"

VOICE: THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY WILL BEGIN TO PROBE NEW YORK HARBOR IN DETAIL LATER THIS SPRING WHEN ITS CURATOR-AT-LARGE RETURNS FROM ANOTHER SHIP-HUNTING EXPEDITION IN THE FALKLAND ISLANDS, OFF SOUTH AMERICA'S A CAPE HORN. BUT STANFORD THINKS THE SOCIETY SHOULD HAVE EXPLORED THE SEAGOING TREASURE IN NEW YORK LONG BEFORE THIS:

TAPE: CUT FIVE -- STANFORD (23:)

"WE'RE DOING THE FIRST SERIOUS ARCHEOLOGICAL EXPLORATION OF OUR OWN HARBOR, WHICH WAS THE DOORSTEP TO THE NEW WORLD, WHICH WAS WHERE THREE-QUARTERS OF OUR IMMIGRATION CAME IN. WE'VE GOT OUR BURIED ROOTS RIGHT HERE IN THIS HARBOR, AND WE'RE JUST STARTING TO DIG 'EM UP! BY THE WAY, PEOPLE ALWAYS USED TO LOOK FOR GOLD. THAT'S THE LEAST IMPORTANT THING YOU CAN GET OUT OF THESE HULKS. WHAT YOU GET IS A LITTLE BIT OF YOURSELF, A LITTLE SENSE OF HOW THIS SOCIETY HAPPENED, HOW WE GOT HERE AND WHAT IT WAS LIKE."

VOICE: FOR PETER STANFORD OF THE NATIONAL MARITIME HISTORICAL SOCIETY, THE INSIGHTS INTO HISTORY HE GETS FROM SUNKEN SHIPS ARE WORTH MORE THAN ALL THE GOLD THOSE OLD BOATS COULD POSSIBLY HAVE CARRIED.

ANNCR: GOLDMINE OF HISTORY AT THE DOTTOM OF NEW YORK HARBOR. YOU'VE BEEN LISTENING TO DATELINE, ANOTHER PROGRAM ABOUT PEOPLE, PLACES AND EVENTS IN THE UNITED STATES. JOIN US NEXT _____ (AT THIS TIME) FOR ANOTHER ... DATELINE.

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